

IN THE CLAIMS

For the convenience of the Examiner, all pending claims of the present Application are shown below in numerical order, applying the revised format guidelines of 37 CFR 1.121.

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1. **(Original)** A method for prioritized access to a messaging system, comprising:
receiving at an access controller for a messaging system a request for connection by a user to the messaging system;
determining at the access controller whether the messaging system is available; and
queuing the request at the access controller if the messaging system is not available.
2. **(Original)** The method of Claim 1, further comprising immediately connecting the user with the messaging system if the messaging system is initially available.
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3. **(Original)** The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
determining a class of service (CoS) for the connection; and
queuing the request based on the CoS.
4. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim 3, wherein the CoS includes a priority status associated with the user.
5. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim 4, wherein the priority status associated with the user is established according to an identification number of the user.
6. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim 5, further comprising:
determining a telephone number of the user, at the access controller; and
wherein the identification number corresponds to the telephone number of the user.

7. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim 3, wherein the CoS includes a priority status associated with a called party.

8. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim 7, wherein the priority status associated with the called party is established according to a telephone number of the called party.

9. **(Currently Amended)** The method of Claim 3, wherein the CoS includes a priority status associated with the type of the request for connection.

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10. **(Original)** The method of Claim 9, wherein the type of the request for connection is selected from the group consisting of an internal network request to review a message, an internal network request to leave a message, an external network request to review a message and an external network request to leave a message.

11. **(Original)** The method of Claim 1, further comprising queuing the request based on a time at which the request for connection is received.

12. **(Original)** The method of Claim 1, wherein the messaging system comprises a voicemail system.

13. **(Original)** The method of Claim 1, further comprising connecting the user to the messaging system when the messaging system becomes available and the request is at a primary position in a queue of the access controller.

14. **(Original)** An access controller for a messaging system, comprising:
means for receiving at an access controller for a messaging system a request for connection by a user to the messaging system;
means for determining at the access controller whether the messaging system is available; and
means for queuing the request at the access controller if the messaging system is not available.

15. **(Original)** The access controller of Claim 14, further comprising means for immediately connecting the user with the messaging system if the messaging system is initially available.

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16. **(Original)** The access controller of Claim 14, further comprising:
means for determining a class of service (CoS) for the connection; and
means for queuing the request based on the CoS.

17. **(Currently Amended)** The access controller of Claim 16, wherein the CoS includes a priority status associated with the user.

18. **(Currently Amended)** The access controller of Claim 17, wherein the priority status associated with the user is established according to an identification number of the user.

19. **(Original)** The access controller of Claim 18, further comprising:
means for determining a telephone number of the user; and
means for wherein the identification number corresponds to the telephone number of the user.

20. **(Currently Amended)** The access controller of Claim 16, wherein the CoS includes a priority status associated with a called party.

21. (~~Currently Amended~~) The access controller of Claim 20, wherein the priority status associated with the called party is established according to a telephone number of the called party.

22. (~~Currently Amended~~) The access controller of Claim 16, wherein the CoS includes a priority status associated with the type of the request for connection.

23. (~~Original~~) The access controller of Claim 22, wherein the type of the request for connection is selected from the group consisting of an internal network request to review a message, an internal network request to leave a message, an external network request to review a message and an external network request to leave a message.

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24. (~~Original~~) The access controller of Claim 14, further comprising means for queuing the request based on a time at which the request for connection is received.

25. (~~Original~~) The access controller of Claim 14, wherein the messaging system comprises a voicemail system.

26. (~~Original~~) The access controller of Claim 14, further comprising means for connecting the user to the messaging system when the messaging system becomes available and the request is at a primary position in a queue of the access controller.

27. **(Currently Amended)** A system for prioritized access to a messaging system, comprising:

~~the~~ logic encoded in media; and

the logic operable to receive a request for connection by a user to a messaging system, to determine whether the messaging system is available and to queue the request if the messaging system is not available.

28. **(Original)** The system of Claim 27, the logic further operable to immediately connect the user with the messaging system if the messaging system is initially available.

29. **(Original)** The system of Claim 27, the logic further operable to determine a class of service (CoS) for the connection and to queue the request based on the CoS.

30. **(Currently Amended)** The system of Claim 29, wherein the CoS includes a priority status associated with the user.

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31. **(Currently Amended)** The system of Claim 30, wherein the priority status associated with the user is established according to an identification number of the user.

32. **(Original)** The system of Claim 31, the logic further operable to determine a telephone number of the user, wherein the identification number corresponds to the telephone number of the user.

33. **(Currently Amended)** The system of Claim 29, wherein the CoS includes a priority status associated with a called party.

34. **(Currently Amended)** The system of Claim 33, wherein the priority status associated with the called party is established according to a telephone number of the called party.

35. **(Currently Amended)** The system of Claim 29, wherein the CoS includes a priority status associated with the type of the request for connection.

36. **(Original)** The system of Claim 35, wherein the type of the request for connection is selected from the group consisting of an internal network request to review a message, an internal network request to leave a message, an external network request to review a message and an external network request to leave a message.

37. **(Original)** The system of Claim 27, the logic further operable to queue the request based on a time at which the request for connection is received.

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38. **(Original)** The system of Claim 27, wherein the messaging system comprises a voicemail system.

39. **(Original)** The system of Claim 27, the logic further operable to connect the user to the messaging system when the messaging system becomes available and the request is at a primary position in a queue of the access controller.

40. **(Currently Amended)** A ~~The~~ method for prioritized access to a messaging system, comprising:

receiving at an access controller remote from a messaging system a request for connection by a user to the messaging system;

determining at the access controller whether ports of the messaging system are available;

queuing the request at the access controller if a port of the messaging system is not available;

authenticating the user for access to the messaging system while the request is queued; and

connecting the user to the messaging system when a port of the messaging system becomes available and the request is at a primary position in a queue of the access controller.

41. **(Original)** The method of Claim 40, further comprising queuing the request based on a class of service (CoS) for the connection.

42. **(Original)** The method of Claim 40, further comprising transferring a login token generated by authentication from the access controller to the messaging system.